

in the communities in which they live. And I thank you for that. You're proving what I know is true, that you have to be a dedicated soul to get here in the White House—to get here to the White House when it comes to athletics, but it is that same dedication that makes you achieve excellence in sports that helps you be an excellent person in life.

And so we welcome you here. We thank you for coming. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:26 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Greg Kraft, track and field program head coach, Arizona State University; Dan Brooks, women's golf team head coach, Duke University; Dave Pietramala, men's lacrosse team head coach, Johns Hopkins University; and J Robinson, men's wrestling team head coach, University of Minnesota.

The President's Radio Address *September 22, 2007*

Good morning. In just 8 days, the State Children's Health Insurance Program—or SCHIP—is set to expire. This important program helps children whose families cannot afford private health insurance, but who do not qualify for Medicaid to get the coverage they need. I strongly supported SCHIP as a Governor and have strongly supported it as President. My 2008 budget proposed to increase SCHIP funding by \$5 billion over 5 years, a 20-percent increase over current funding.

Instead of working with my administration to enact this funding increase for children's health, Democrats in Congress have decided to pass a bill they know will be vetoed. One of their leaders has even said such a veto would be "a political victory." As if this weren't irresponsible enough, Congress is waiting until the SCHIP program is just about to expire before passing a final bill. In other words, Members of Congress are risking health coverage for poor children purely to make a political point.

The proposal congressional leaders are pushing would raise taxes on working Americans and would raise spending by \$35 to \$50 billion. Their proposal would result in taking a program meant to help poor children and turning it into one that covers

children in some households with incomes of up to \$83,000 a year. And their proposal would move millions of children who now have private health insurance into Government-run health care. Our goal should be to move children who have no health insurance to private coverage, not to move children who already have private health insurance to Government coverage.

My administration remains committed to working with Congress to pass a responsible SCHIP bill. In the meantime, I called this week for Congress to make sure health insurance for poor children does not lapse. If they fail to do so, more than a million children could lose health coverage. Health coverage for these children should not be held hostage while political ads are being made and new polls are being taken. Congress must pass a clean, temporary extension of the current SCHIP program that I can sign by September 30th, the date the program expires.

In addition to extending the SCHIP program, Congress needs to focus on passing fundamental spending bills, especially the annual funding bill for the Department of Defense. Congress must also pass additional funding for our troops fighting the war on terror. We need these bills so we can get our men and women in uniform

essential equipment, like additional armored fighting vehicles that are resistant to mines and ambushes.

The American people expect their elected leaders in Washington to work together by passing responsible bills in a timely manner. I am confident that with good will on both sides, Democrats and Republicans can do this. We can meet our obligations to help poor children get health coverage. We can meet our responsibilities to the men and women keeping our Nation safe.

And we can do our duty to spend the taxpayers' money wisely.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on September 21 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 22. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 21, but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks to the Young Presidents' Organization *September 24, 2007*

Thank you all. Please be seated. I've spoken to a lot of people in this room, but rarely have I spoken to a group of people who I can address, Mr. President, or Madam President. [*Laughter*] I thank you for joining us. I appreciate Jim Nussle joining us as well.

I look forward to having—giving you a few remarks on the budget. As business leaders, you know it's important to set priorities and make decisions in a timely way. That's what you do on a daily basis. If you were running a company whose lease was up for renewal in a few months, you'd ask the landlord to start negotiating on prices and terms. You would anticipate the cancellation of the—or the renegotiation of the lease. You would ask for time to think about the best way forward, and you wouldn't be happy if the landlord waited until the night before your time was up and then dropped on your desk a 500-page lease that he expected you to sign. In the business world, that's called alienating your customers. [*Laughter*] In Washington, that's called the appropriations process. [*Laughter*]

The fiscal year ends in less than a week. Yet Congress has not sent a single appro-

priations bill to my desk. Not one. Instead, the congressional leaders may end up lumping all 12 outstanding appropriations bills into one massive, trillion-dollar piece of legislation later this year. This would make it easier for Members to sneak in all kinds of special projects, put in wasteful spending or porkbarrel that they are not willing to debate in the open.

If they think that by waiting until just before they leave for the year to send me a bill that is way over budget and thicker than a phonebook, if they think that's going to force me to sign it, it's not. This would be bad for our country, it would be harmful for our economy, and it would be unfair for the taxpayers.

This is an important time for our economy. For nearly 6 years, we've enjoyed uninterrupted economic growth. Since August 2003, the economy has added more than 8.2 million jobs. Productivity is growing, and that's translating into larger paychecks for American workers. Unemployment is low, inflation is low, and opportunity abounds. The entrepreneurial spirit is strong.

You know, this economic vitality just didn't happen—in other words, it's—I think